This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. **(Previously presented)** Apparatus for the preparation of salt melts, and mixtures thereof, of the formula

$$MDX_4 \qquad (I)$$

in which

M is Li, Na, K, Rb or Cs,

D is Al, Ga, In or Tl, and

X is F, Cl, Br or I,

comprising a heatable stirred reactor (1) and a downstream tubular reactor (4), wherein the stirred reactor (1) contains a zone which, owing to the tank geometry, cannot contain solids, and the tubular reactor (4) or its feed line extends into this solid free zone.

2. **(Previously presented)** Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the tubular reactor (4) is arranged vertically.

3. **(Previously presented)** Apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein solids metering units (2,3) for controlled addition of mixing of the starting materials are arranged upstream of the stirred reactor (1).

4. **(Previously presented)** Apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein a purification unit (5,6), comprising a column or tower (5) filled with metal granules (d) and a

column or tower filled with alkali metal salt (MX), is arranged downstream of the tubular reactor (4).

5. (Currently Amended) Process for the preparation of salt melts of the formula (I):

$$MDX_4 \qquad (I)$$

in which

M is Li, Na, K, Rb or Cs,

D is Al, Ga, In or Tl, and

X is F, Cl, Br or I,

by reacting a metal halide of the formula DX_3 (II) with an alkali metal salt of the formula MX (III), wherein the reaction is carried out in an apparatus according to Claim 1, where the reaction is carried out firstly in a stirred reactor (1) and subsequently in a tubular reactor (4).

6. (Previously presented) Process according to Claim 5, wherein the salts are reacted at different temperatures in the stirred reactor (1) and the tubular reactor (4).

7. (Previously presented) Process according to Claim 5, wherein the salts are reacted at temperatures between 50 and 800°C.

8. (Previously presented) Process according to Claim 5, wherein the reaction is carried out continuously.

9. – 16. (Canceled)